NEWLY DISCOVERED ARCHIVAL MATERIALS IN THE INDIA OFFICE RECORDS RELATING TO THE POST-1600 PERIOD OF INDIAN HISTORY.

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In preparing this type of archival survey one is immediately faced with the problem of having to adopt certain rather arbitrary definitions in order to decide which materials should be included and which left out. In this particular case the terms which most clearly call for definition are 'newly' and 'discovered'. How 'new' is new? 'New to whom? ' How far should one describe as 'newly discovered' recent government archives which becam available for research through the regular operation of general access rules? Are rediscoveries the same as discoveries And so on.

For the purposes of this paper I propose to confine the survey of archival materials to the following types of material now held in the India Office Records.

(1) Records of departments of the former India Office which for the most part first became available for public inspection in 1968 and subsequent years following the introduction of the thirty-year rule in Britain. Within this category I shall concentrate on whole new groups of departmental records which had only been formally transferred to the India Office Records by successive departments in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office a few years prior to their general opening in 1968 and which, to the best of my knowledge, have not so far been extensively used by historians.

(2) Records of a more fragmentary and heterogeneous character which were in fact discovered, or at any rate rediscovered in 1967, as a result of a systematic search of the whole Foreign and Commonwealth Office building and related offices undertaken in preparation for the move of the India Office Library and Records from Westminster to Blackfriars Road which took place late in 1967.

(3) Records which have come to light since our move to our new building in 1967 either in the form of occasional new 'finds' in the old Westminster building or as a result of more intensive investigation of the materials already in our custody.

(4) Private collections acquired since our list of 'Accessions of Private Archives' was issued in 1969. Here I will just make a few general remarks about recent changes in the scope of our acquisitions policy. A short list of collections acquired since 1969 forms the appendix to the paper.